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The Prospects of the Year.

In some respects the new year does not open under very favorable auspices. The war in the Philippines still goes on, occupying the attention of government and people, and making a permanent and expensive increase in the military and naval establishments more and more certain. To what this is ultimately to lead and what the permanent effect is to be upon the character of the people and the nation cannot be foreseen with clearness, but the outlook is of ill omen. It is not only wrong, but an evidence of moral weakness, poverty of character and unworthy patriotism to shut one's eyes to the dark prospect, and carelessly let things run adrift.

On the other side of the water the prospect is sad beyond expression. A war which is almost universally condemned throughout the civilized world is raging between two peoples who ought to be living

in fraternal relations of the most cordial kind. They are shooting down and maiming each other by thousands. Homes—how many God only can count—are being filled with grief and paralyzing dread, and many of them wrecked forever. The preparations and the determined spirit manifested on both sides prophesy more bloody and awful scenes to come, and however the conflict may ultimately be settled, Boer and Briton will hereafter hate each other in South Africa with an intensity that will bode many ills in the years to come. The whole of Europe, which is not in the least slackening its insane rivalry of armaments, is looking on with an evil eye, and, whether it falls into the struggle or not, its evil genius of militarism is sure, as the result of Britain's military display, to take stronger possession of it than heretofore. From every point of view the South African war is deplorable.

With these things going on, there are those who consider the cause of peace as utterly hopeless, and all efforts put forth in its behalf as wasted. This is not our view. The existence of this dark outlook is in itself a clarion call to duty. But, besides, there are three considerations of a positive nature which clearly indicate that the wave of the peace movement is higher and mightier than ever before, in spite of the strong undertow setting backward.

The first of these considerations is the prospect of the early establishment of the permanent international court of arbitration provided for by the Hague Conference. This is now assured. The twenty-six powers represented at the Conference have now all, through their delegates, signed the convention for the pacific settlement of international disputes. With most of them this is equal to ratification. Shortly the ratifications will begin to be deposited at The Hague. After Secretary Hay's strong recommendation of the convention to the Senate, to which reference is made on another page, there is no doubt that our government will shortly be in position to send its ratification. Our delegates while at The Hague signed the convention under instructions from the President. The setting up of this court by the joint action of the nations will be the greatest practical step forward taken by the peace movement since it was organized, the greatest political step towards

international harmony since history began. To talk of the peace cause being hopeless, in the presence of this extraordinary attainment, is to be guilty of inexcusable blindness.

The other two considerations are equally important in their way. The peace movement was never so widely spread, so thoroughly organized and so aggressive as it is now. It is also on a new vantage ground of respect in public opinion, given it by the Hague Conference. The movement has also gone far beyond the borders of the organized peace associations, and many men and women, in various positions of power and trust, are throwing their influence constantly against war. No cause can fail whose supporters become constantly more numerous, better organized, more intelligent and more aggressive.

The other consideration has great significance. Every war nowadays has to defend itself against an intelligent and persistent opposition. Once war in the abstract was opposed, but every particular war justified or excused by practically everybody. This is no longer the case. The present war in the Philippines is so strongly opposed, on both political and moral grounds, by so large a portion of the best and most intelligent and most patriotic people of the country, that the President feels compelled in his latest message to devote a whole newspaper column of argument in defense against the powerful indictment. The same is true of the war in South Africa. Not only has it been condemned by public sentiment outside of England, but by many leading Englishmen themselves, both in public and private life. These wars are a heavy burden on the growing conscience of the civilized world, and it is likely that any future wars will be even more so. This is a significant sign of promise which not even the sudden darkness of these days can hide from view.

The year before us, we believe, is destined to see remarkable events in the way of peace. A great reaction is sure to come when the present wars are over, and before the century closes there is still reason to hope that the sun of peace and goodwill will break through the clouds with a brilliancy never yet seen.

Needs of Our Work.

The condition of our funds compels us again to ask our members and friends for generous contributions in support of the work of the year. Their ready response in the past makes us confident that we shall not appeal in vain at the present time. We shall need at least fifteen hundred dollars in addition to what is expected from ordinary sources, and could use most profitably many times that sum.

Circumstances over which we have no control have temporarily rendered a considerable portion of the Peace Fund held in trust for our use much less productive than formerly. This has greatly reduced

our income. This condition, brought about by the decay of buildings, cannot be improved until an advantageous sale of properties and a reinvestment of funds can be made.

Meantime, with greatly enlarged opportunities, the demands upon us have grown heavier every year. Many fields have opened and are still opening for the circulation of our periodicals and our pamphlet literature. This work for the most part has to be done gratuitously. Without increased resources we cannot meet the demand, even to the extent which we have been doing.

It would be unfortunate in every way to be compelled to cut down our work at the present time. The triumphs the past year, through the Hague Conference, of the principles which the American Peace Society has for over seventy years advocated, place peace work henceforth in a position of power and promise hitherto unknown. Every effort should be put forth to make the most of the advantageous circumstances. The fruits of victory must not be thrown away, in the presence of an enemy ever returning to the conflict. The evil against which we are contending is alarmingly aggressive. It shows no disposition to quit the field. It spares nothing of that which is dearest in life. No attainment of civilization seems safe before it.

Money, in sums incredibly vast, is voted for new—ever new—war preparations. In comparison with a single one of the latest war credits,—one hundred million dollars for the French navy and coast defences,—in comparison even with the private contributions made for the glorification of a single war hero, how small seems all that has ever been given for the great and holy cause of peace! If the peace movement has made such progress without money, what might it not have done with a tithe of the war budgets in its treasury!

We wish we could do the work so loudly called for without money. But we have not yet discovered any way to do it. We do not ask our friends for millions: dollars will do just as well if plenty of them come. We shall be very grateful for any contributions, large or small, which our friends may send. And we shall be more pleased still to receive the names of a large number of new members of the Society and new subscribers to the *ADVOCATE OF PEACE* and the *ANGEL OF PEACE*. Have all checks and money orders drawn payable to the American Peace Society.